

The City College For Women

Commencement Nowadays Sees Young Women Graduated from both Country and Urban Colleges--The Institutions in the Big Industrial Centres Started as Schools for Girls Who Could Not Leave Home, but They Have All Broadened Their Scope--The Example of One Self-Made College--The Libraries and Laboratories of the Large Universities Exert Greater and Greater Attraction for Women Students.

PROVIDENCE, June 27, 1908.—Urban colleges for women became a necessity of city life a few years ago. Usually they started as "annexes" of the larger universities which have grown up in the industrial centres and gave young women living in the immediate vicinity a chance to get the benefit of instruction offered by world famous teachers. The gradual transformation of these colleges into national institutions have proved the wisdom of locating them near the libraries and laboratories of leading universities and among the activities of busy commercial communities.

There are in general, without reference to the co-educational institutions, two types of colleges for women. The older ones were usually placed at some distance from a large city, for when college education for women was first inaugurated a generation ago the training was conceived primarily to be for the benefit of daughters of well to do families. Attractiveness of location was made a first consideration in creating the college home, so that for obvious reasons the colleges were founded in rural or semi-rural communities.

A little later the need of furnishing facilities for the higher education of young women who for one reason or another could not leave home led to the foundation of such institutions as Barnard College, connected with Columbia University, Radcliffe, now under the protectorate of Harvard and the Women's College of Brown University in Providence. These are primarily city colleges. They all began with meagre equipment of their own, although rich in the opportunities afforded by the apparatus of scholarship that heretofore was accessible only to me students. Although situated in cities where land is valuable they have, while growing in numbers and influence, developed an attractiveness of their own, the result of beautiful libraries, gymnasiums and dormitories, well arranged campuses and facilities for social life.

Each type of women's college has its advantages. With the older institutions, with their social festivities, their float days and mountain climbing parties, the public has become very familiar through pictures and descriptions. It is probably not generally appreciated, however, to what an extent the urban schools for the higher education of girls have been developed and made an essential part of city life.

The women's college in a village or in the open country is necessarily somewhat apart from the great world. There is an idea in it of Arcadian simplicity and academic seclusion. The young women lodged in dormitories which look out over a pleasant prospect of woods and hills go through a period of study and fun making in which their life is a little different from that in most American families. Poetry, art, pure science, and the other subjects of the course they study, oftentimes perhaps with a feeling that they have reached a plane of activities somewhat above the sordid pursuits at home, where father comes in tired and cross from wrangling with a labor union leader as to who shall dominate his factory, and where mother regularly gets nervous prostration during spring house cleaning. A course at many of the women's colleges in the country means a season of preparation for the tasks of everyday life through indulgence in the dreams and romantic aspirations which to a considerable extent are the natural right of youth.

The city college for women, in practically every instance, came into existence because of the conviction that the accumulated treasures of a great Eastern university ought not to be permanently inaccessible to women, and that a staff of renowned professors without delivering some message to the womanhood around them. For many reasons many girls cannot desert their home duties during the period of college education. These girls, if they go to college at all, must be able to live at home. To make a place for their training was, therefore, the prime idea in creating the colleges now affiliated with several of the eastern universities. As Miss Lida Shaw King, dean of the Women's College at Brown, wrote in a recent magazine article: "Too great emphasis cannot, I think, be laid upon this function, probably the prime function, of the college situated in the populous district—to give a col-

lege education to these young men and women who from one cause or another must get their education at home or go without. It becomes especially important if the college be a women's college. Girls can leave home less easily than boys. Parents are less apt to see the necessity of a college education for their girls than their boys, and are unwilling to incur the greater expense of sending them away to college. For many girls there are home cares from which the boys are exempt and from many is demanded a contribution to the life of the household from which the boys are readily excused."

If the women's colleges founded to fulfill this purpose it has been discovered that the advantages of the location tend more and more to cause the institutions very shortly to cease being merely local.

A one source attendance from outside, there are many country girls to whom the chance of getting a college education in the city is as valuable as are facilities for college education in the country to city girls whose means permit. For the young woman from the farm or the village four years at an urban school for the higher education not only means learning the subjects which an educated person ought to know and which make both for general culture and for usefulness as a wage earner or as wife and mother, but at the same time it signifies becoming acquainted under healthful and stimulating conditions with the routine of larger city. In the city colleges, therefore, are found as a rule many young women who live at home, for reasons of economy or otherwise, and many girls from country homes who expect their lot to be cast in the city.

Then, too, where a city college for women is part of a large university the daughters of the graduates of the university wherever living are very likely to come to the educational center at which their brothers are trained. Many students, of course, are also attracted mainly by the libraries, laboratories and museums and similar opportunities for studying in any urban community. Women students in Providence, for example, though this college is only sixteen years old, are in full possession of treasures of scholarship which have been in process of collection during 140 years. Similar conditions, of course, prevail in Cambridge and on Morningside Heights in New York City.

How wisely Dr. Benjamin Andrews during his presidency at Brown University foresaw the need and the possibilities of the city college for girls has been proved by the marked success of the Women's College of Brown, which has not, indeed, become a big institution with a long waiting list of candidates for admission to its classes, but which has always illustrated the usefulness in the average American city of a college drawing at first mainly from the neighborhood and later marking available for young women from other places the educational and social advantages of an urban centre. Incidentally, of course, the city college, whether for men or women, offers greater opportunities for the wage earning student than the country college can afford. Providence, with its surrounding manufacturing towns, is one of the largest centers of population of the country, and the Women's College of Brown, now completing 16 years of its existence, has had a remarkable growth, made possible in large part by such gifts as the Slater Memorial dormitory, built by the generosity of Horatio N. Slater, of Readville, Mass., and furnished by Mrs. Charles G. Washburn, of Worcester; the new gymnasium, the gift of Frank A. Sayles of Pawtucket, in memory of his mother and sister, and an addition to the present campus just finished, the gift of Stephen O. Metcalf, of Providence. All the while the value of the local interest in creating a national institution has been proved by the constant and untiring efforts of the Rhode Island Society for the Collegiate Education of Women under the direction of the enthusiastic president, Miss Sarah E. Doyle.

This story of the development of a little local urban college for the instruction of young women in the studies ordinarily pursued in college is an important school of the higher education reaching a national clientele has now been repeated often

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enough in this country to show that the city college has a distinct place in the economy of American education.

HOUSE OF GOVERNOR.

Probably the most important and far-reaching act of President Roosevelt's career will prove to be the calling together of the governors of states to confer upon the best methods of preserving our natural resources and co-operating in other matters which need uniform state laws. The effect of the conference are already widely felt, and it will not be surprising if even Uncle Joe concludes that the government must have some stringent forestation laws, and have 'em quick. James J. Hill's speech presented an array of grim and horrifying facts marching straight upon us. May they give Uncle Joe nightmares prodigious and prolific, until he wide-awakes to the sharpness of the public needs. Until he helps push through measures reserving every available foot of forest, and compelling some degree of disgorgement by those who have tricked the public out of huge slices of its timber, and coal and iron. As soon as these laws are passed let Joseph Cannon bend his energies to passing yet other laws and appropriations for immediate reforestation of denuded and eroded lands. Then we'll call off the nightmares and maybe consider Joe as a presidential possibility.

Right here let me say, if you, my reader, are not white hot in favor of immediate and radical legislation on these lines it is because you are not awake! Maybe your nose is on the grindstone. Get it off a while and help, or your children won't have noses at all. Go read "The Slaughter of the Trees," in May Everybody's. And write the Forestry Department, Washington, to send you all their pamphlets on forestry and coal and iron land matters, and to mail you a public report of that governor's conference and all the speeches, particularly Jim Hill's, just as soon as they can be printed. If those don't give you nightmares and wake you up to work and vote for adequate laws then you are a hopeless mucker.—Elizabeth Towne in July Nautilus.

ICE FROM PRESSED SNOW

Dana Dudley in a copyrighted article in the July number of Popular Mechanics says:

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